

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 EB-07 CU-02 SCCT-01 DHA-02 ORM-02

AID-05 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 NEA-10 SSM-03 OMB-01

IO-11 SY-05 /120 W

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R 031429Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8377

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2637

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS ET

SUBJECT: CURRENT SITUATION IN ADDIS ABABA

REF: ADDIS ABABA 2158 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY- ARRESTS CONTINUE IN ADDIS ABABA BUT THE CITY REMAINS CALM; SHORTAGE OF SEVERAL FOOD STAPLE ITEMS CONTINUES; DIRG VICE CHAIRMEN AGAIN RECEIVING HEAVY MEDIA COVERAGE AFTER A PERIOD OF NO PUBLICITY; MOST SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED DUE TO STUDENT DISRUPTIONS; ETHIOPIAN MEDIA REPORT SEVERAL "ANTI-REVOLUTIONARIES" KILLED AFTER SHOOTOUTS IN CITY; FORMER VICE MINISTER OF COMMERCE ESCAPES AND A MILITARY OFFICER IS ARRESTED NEAR KENYA BORDER FOR ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE. END SUMMARY.

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1. EPMG CONTINUES WAVE OF ARRESTS (SOME SAY UP TO 2,000 HAVE BEEN ARRESTED) WITH LATEST ARRESTEES REPORTED TO BE INTER ALIA FROM ADDIS MERCHANT CLASS AND MILITARY, APPARENTLY WITHOUT REGARD TO TRIBAL AFFILIATION. THIS IS IN CONTRAST WITH EARLIER ARRESTS WHICH MANY QUALIFIED AS ROUND-UP OF GOJJAMIS AND NORTHERNERS SUSPECTED OF BEING CONNECTED WITH DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS, AS WELL AS OLD ORDER FIGURES. AMONG RECENT ARRESTEES ARE: SHIFEREW WORKU FROM MOFA; COL. TSEGAYE YIMER, FORMERLY COMMANDANT OF THE NFANTRY SGWOOL AT HOLETA; AND LT.COL. ABEBE TEFERI WHO CAME FROM ASMARA TO ADDIS TO VISIT A WOUNDED COMRADE AND WAS ARRESTED. FORMER TENSE ATMOSPHERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN REPLACED BY ONE OF RESIGNATION ON THE PART OF THOSE FACING POSSIBLE ARREST AND ADDIS ABABA IS CALM IN SPITE OF SEVERAL SHOOT-OUTS WITH "REACTIONARIES" RESISTING ARREST. OTHER UNEXPLAINED SHOOTING INCIDENTS HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY, PARTICULARLY IN THE ADDIS MERCATO AREA AT NIGHT.

2. A RETIRED ARMY OFFICER, LT.COL. TADESSA TESSEMA, AND AN UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF "ACCOMPLICES," ACCORDING TO GOVT MEDIA, WERE KILLED IN ADDIS ABABA ON FEB 27 WHILE RESISTING ARREST. TWO OTHER UNNAMED INDIVIDUALS WERE PORTEDLY KILLED RESISTING ARREST ON THE SAME DAY, ALTHOUGH PRESS MAKES NO MENTION OF IT. IN ALL THREE INCIDENTS, JEEP-MOUNTED MACHINE GUNS AND RECOILLESS RIFLES SURROUNDED FUGITIVES' HOMES AND RETURNED FIRE OF WOULD-BE ARRESTEES. SEVERAL SECURITY MEN WERE REPORTEDLY KILLED IN THE EXCHANGES OF GUNFIRE. WE HEAR THAT ONE OF THE "REACTIONARIES" JUMPED THE WALL FROM HIS COMPOUND INTO THE ADJACENT GABONESE AMBASSADOR'S COMPOUND WHERE HE WAS SHOT DEAD.

3. ETHIOPIAN MEDIA GIVE PROMINENT TREATMENT TO THE ARREST OF LT.COL. GETACHEW HAILE WHO ALONG WITH HIS WIFE AN FOUR CHILDREN AND A FRIEND WERE ARRESTED NEAR ETHIOPIA-KENYA BORDER WHILE ATTEMPTING TO FLEE THE COUNTRY. FORMER VICE MINISTER OF COMMERCE, IN CHARGE OF ETHIOPIAN TOURIST ORGANIZATION, ABDUL JALIL, WAS MORE SUCCESSFUL IN HIS ESCAPE ATTEMPT. AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF "STAGED" PUBLIC MARITAL DISPUTES WITH HIS AMERICAN WIFE, THE TWO WERE (PUTATIVELY) DIVORCED AND SHE TOOK HALF THE PROPERTY AND RETURNED TO THE U.S. WHEN ABDUL JALIL WAS SENT TO YUGOSLAVIA AS A MEMBER OF AN ETHIOPIAN TOURIST ORGANIZATION DELEGATION, HE TOOK THAT OPPORTUNITY TO REJOIN HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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FORMER WIFE IN THE U.S. WHERE HE REPORTEDLY IS NOW STAYING.

4. FOOD SHORTAGES OF STAPLE ITEMS SUCH AS TEFF, ONIONS, RED PEPPERS, AND SOME OTHER CEREAL GRAINS CONTINUE IN ADDIS ALTHOUGH THE TEFF SHORTAGE APPEARS TO HAVE EASED SOMEWHAT. PRICES REMAIN 20 TO 30 PERCENT HIGHER THAN A YEAR AGO ON MOST STAPLE ITEMS, CAUSING WIDESPREAD GRUMBLING. ETHIOPIAN MEDIA HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED FOOD SHORTAGES, BLAMING THEM ON "HOARDERS," WHO, THEY

EDITORIALIZED, SHOULD BE SHOT.

5. MOST ADDIS SECONDARY SCHOOLS REMAIN CLOSED DUE TO DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES OF ANTI-DIRG STUDENTS. STUDENTS STILL ATTEMPT TO MOUNT OCCASIONAL ANTI-GOVT DEMONSTRATIONS BUT THESE SELDOM GET AIRBORNE BECAUSE OF SWIFT REACTION BY SECURITY FORCES. STUDENTS AND LABOR UNIONS CONTINUE TO INUNDATE CITY WITH UNDERGROUND PAMPHLETS (SAMPLES WILL BE POUCHED TO DEPT) BUT THE EFFECT OF THESE LEAFLETS IS PROBABLY MINIMAL. TWO REPORTS, ONE FROM A PURPORTED EYE-WITNESS, CLAIM THAT THE MOST NOTORIOUS OF THE PAMPHLETEERS, THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY ("DEMOCRACIA"), HAS BEEN BROKEN UP AND THEIR DUPLICATING MACHINE CAPTURED FEB 29. HOWEVER INEFFECTUAL THESE PAMPHLETS MAY BE, HARSHLY WORDED EPMG STATEMENT OF LATE FEBRUARY ATTACKING BOURGEOIS LABOR ELEMENTS WHO WERE ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTING TO UNDERMINE FORMATION OF NEW ALL-ETHIOPIA TRADE UNION WAS SEEN BY SOME AS REACTION TO UNDERGROUND LABOR PAMPHLET CHARGES THAT DIRG IS MANIPULATING LABOR MOVEMENT.

6. DIRG VICE-CHAIRMEN MENGISTU AND ATNAFU HAVE BEEN PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED IN PRESS AND ON TELEVISION FOR PAST SEVERAL DAYS, PARTICULARLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH AFRICAN CUP SOCCER TOURNAMENT. THIS CONTRASTS WITH PREVIOUS SEVERAL WEEKS (CF REFTTEL) WHEN THEIR LACK OF VISIBILITY HAD ONCE AGAIN STARTED RUMORS THAT THEY WERE ON THE SKIDS.

7. CELEBRATION OF ETHIOPIA'S 1896 VICTORY OVER ITALIANS AT ADOWA WAS HELD IN ADDIS ABABA MARCH 2 IN RELAXED FESTIVE MOOD. PEASANT AND URBAN ASSOCIATION MEMBERS PARADED. PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTE SPOKE ON THE OCCASION IN PRESENCE OF THE TWO VICE CHAIRMEN, EMPHASIZING ETHIOPIA'S EXAMPLE OF AFRICA IN REPELLING COLONIALISTS, AND WARNING THAT NEW COLONIAL ATTEMPTS ARE UNDER WAY EVEN TODAY THROUGH THE RED SEA (MEANING ARAB AID TO ERITREAN  
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SEPARATISTS).  
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## Message Attributes

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